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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.
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09/486,280 02/24/00 THOMAS

D 29038/10006

EXAMINER

PM82/0925  
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KRIZEK, J

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3652  
DATE MAILED:

09/25/01

**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

**Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks**

# Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/486,280

Applicant(s)

Thomas et al.

Examiner

Knizek

Group Art Unit

3652

—The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet beneath the correspondence address—

## Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE ONE MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, such period shall, by default, expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).

## Status

- ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_.
- ☐ This action is **FINAL**.
- ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, **prosecution as to the merits is closed** in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 1 1; 453 O.G. 213.

## Disposition of Claims

- ☒ Claim(s) 1-45 is/are pending in the application.
- Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- ☒ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are rejected.
- ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- ☒ Claim(s) 1-45 are subject to restriction or election requirement.

## Application Papers

- ☐ See the attached Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review, PTO-948.
- ☐ The proposed drawing correction, filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is ☐ approved ☐ disapproved.
- ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to by the Examiner.
- ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

## Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119 (a)-(d)

- ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d).
  - ☐ All ☐ Some\* ☐ None of the CERTIFIED copies of the priority documents have been received.
  - ☐ received in Application No. (Series Code/Serial Number) \_\_\_\_\_.
  - ☐ received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 1 7.2(a)).

\*Certified copies not received: \_\_\_\_\_.

## Attachment(s)

- ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s), PTO-1449, Paper No(s). \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Interview Summary, PTO-413
- ☐ Notice of Reference(s) Cited, PTO-892
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application, PTO-152
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review, PTO-948
- ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Office Action Summary

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1. Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:
  - I. Claims 1-36, drawn to multi-purpose vessels, classified in class 414, subclass 137.7.
  - II. Claims 37-45, drawn to methods of handling material in waterways, classified in class 414, subclass 803.

2. The inventions are distinct, each from the other because:

Inventions II and I are related as processes and apparatus for their practice. The inventions are distinct if it can be shown that either: (1) the process as claimed can be practiced by another materially different apparatus or by hand, or (2) the apparatus as claimed can be used to practice another and materially different process. (MPEP § 806.05(e)). In this case, the apparatus can be used to practice other processes such as a process involving receiving material in a hopper and a process involving transferring material between a first portion, a second portion and a distribution conveyor of a conveyor system.

3. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art as shown by their different classification, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

4. Applicant is reminded that upon the cancellation of claims to a non-elected invention, the inventorship must be amended in compliance with 37 CFR 1.48(b) if one or more of the currently named inventors is no longer an inventor of at least one claim remaining in the application. Any

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amendment of inventorship must be accompanied by a petition under 37 CFR 1.48(b) and by the fee required under 37 CFR 1.17(I).

5. Applicant is advised that the reply to this requirement to be complete must include an election of the invention to be examined even though the requirement be traversed (37 CFR 1.143).

6. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Examiner Janice Krizek whose telephone number is (703) 308-2026. The examiner can normally be reached on Mondays through Fridays from 9:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Eileen Lillis, can be reached at (703) 308-3248. The fax number for Technology Center 3600 is (703) 305-7687.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the Center receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-1113.

jlk  
September 24, 2001

  
Janice L. Krizek  
Primary Examiner  
Technology Center 3600